

THE BOOK THAT'S SWEEPING AMERICA!

or
*Why I Love
Business!*

THE WORLD'S #1 BUSINESS GURU!

STEPHEN MICHAEL PETER THOMAS

Author of the International Business Bestseller *Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better*

THE BOOK
THAT'S
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Or
WHY I LOVE BUSINESS!

STEPHEN MICHAEL PETER THOMAS

As told to John Butman
The Consultant's Consultant



JOHN WILEY & SONS, INC.

New York • Chichester • Weinheim • Brisbane • Singapore • Toronto

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Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

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information should be addressed to the Permissions Department,
John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 605 Third Avenue, New York, NY
10158-0012.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data:

Thomas, Stephen Michael Peter.

The book that's sweeping America! or Why I love business!

Stephen Michael Peter Thomas.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-471-17398-3 (cloth : alk. paper)

1. Business — Humor. I. Title.

PN6231.B85T48 1996

818'.5402 — dc20

96-36654

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

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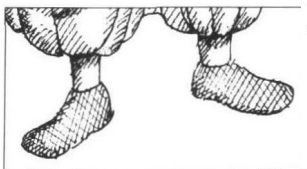


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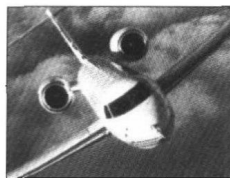


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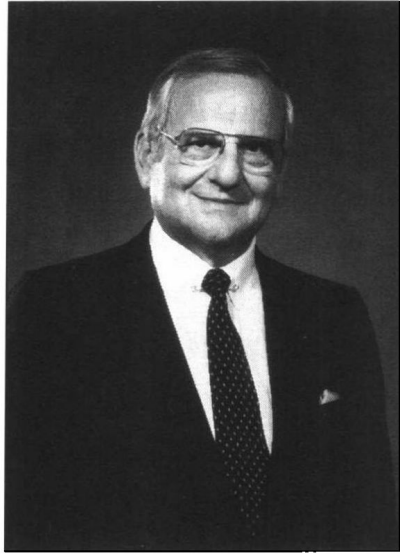
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elcome!

The Book That's Sweeping America! is a breakthrough business book. Why? Because in this deceptively slim and easy-to-read volume, Stephen Michael Peter Thomas — The World's #1 Business Guru — explains the most powerful global business concepts. He offers results-oriented, easy-to-implement methods and practices. He draws on his years of experience as adviser to the world's most successful business organizations to provide you with knowledge, insight, and, yes, wisdom.

And yet, absolutely none of his ideas are actually new or different enough to challenge you or make you feel uncomfortable in any way.

That's why so many Fortune 500 executives, influential government officials, academic heavyweights, and superstar athletes seek him out. Steve tells them exactly what they've heard a thousand times before, but makes it sound excitingly fresh and new.



*Lee Iacocca,
legendary auto executive,
cites the Smeaton-Thomas
Success Factors Grid
as a significant factor
in maximizing his
leadership performance.*

Now you can take advantage of Steve's decades of experience. He renders complex ideas so simple that virtually anyone can understand them — including your average CEO — through the innovative use of:

- ☛ Fascinating case **stories** and **interviews** drawn from the world's most successful organizations.
- ☛ Eye-catching **photos**, **charts**, and **graphics**, including Steve's own inimitable **drawings** and visual **"impressions."** (Call 1-888-4-STHOMAS.)
- ☛ Learning **summaries**, informative **Q&As**, and **exercises** you can implement in your workplace — tomorrow!

And, It's *Interactive!*

And that's not all. *The Book That's Sweeping America!* is the very first interactive business book. All the words have been individually selected and then carefully sequenced into user-friendly phrases, easily digestible sentences, and paragraphs crammed with powerful meaning.

However, the editors are keenly aware that no single word ordering is likely to meet the specific needs of every individual reader. Accordingly, the words and sentences can be read in any order you choose!

Unlike other business books, *The Book That's Sweeping America!* does not force you into a rigid structure based on logic or on some personal creative or literary need of the author. No, *The Book That's Sweeping America!* allows you to explore the world of business at your own pace and in your own way — with absolutely no impact on the validity or coherence of the ideas.

So, let's begin!

In *The Book That's Sweeping America!*, you will join Stephen Michael Peter Thomas on an incredible journey into some of the world's most successful and progressive organizations.

You will meet visionary leaders.

You will encounter thought-provoking concepts.



*William Gates,
well-known software executive,
attributes much of his
worldwide success to the
use of Global Hand Gestures
and Facial Expressions.*

And, when you are done, you will find yourself inspired and motivated. You will return to the workplace eager to employ the fresh buzzwords and cleverly repackaged homilies you have just learned — without any fear they will have any impact whatsoever on your company, your colleagues, or the way you do business.

In fact, *The Book That's Sweeping America!* is so wonderfully obvious and incredibly basic you'll find it hard to believe that's all there is to it. But remember: Many of the world's most successful and influential people have paid astronomical fees to hear Stephen Michael Peter Thomas say even less than he does in this book.

And, now — in your own small way — you can be one of them!

The Editors

ow I Began This Life of Learning

Good Morning!

Thank you for joining me in this book.

Notice I did not say “my” book because *The Book That’s Sweeping America!* truly is the work of many people. And so, before we begin Learning, please allow me to acknowledge, with a deep sense of humility and gratitude, a few of my collaborators:

☛ Thank you, **Clients!** You are among the most successful, brilliant, and influential people the world has ever known. It is possible that I have Learned almost as much from you as you have from me.

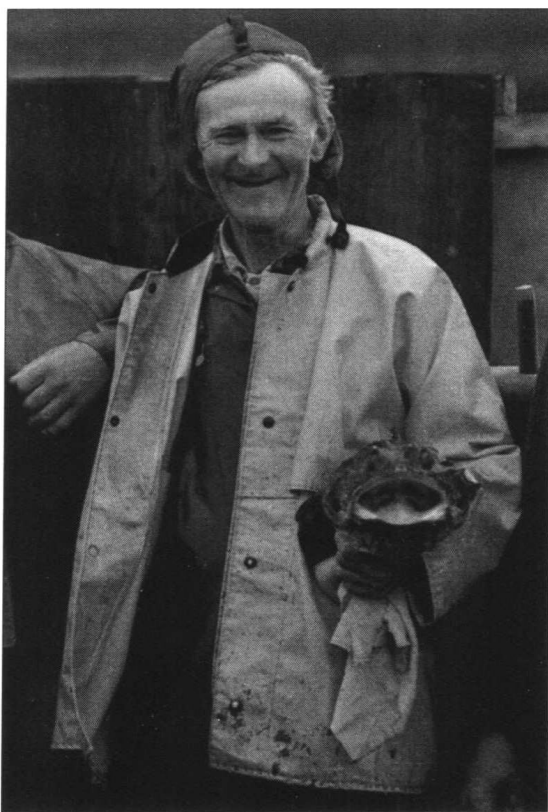


*Client and friend
Margaret Thatcher,
as she departs from a three-day
Thomas seminar on minimiz-
ing gender differences in
the workplace.
(Call 1-888-4-STHOMAS.)*

☛ Thank you, **Family!**

- Beloved parents
- Devoted wife
- Nine children (Hi, you Overachievers!)
- Faithful dog “Asset”

☛ Last, but not least, thank you, **Mr. Ray Wilson!**



*My early
business mentor,
Mr. Raymond Wilson,
proprietor of
Wilson's Fish Market.*

My First Learnings

My first and most powerful Learnings were taught me by a humble — yet strangely effective — fish market proprietor, Ray Wilson.

You see, I was not always the globe-trotting confidante of tycoons, billionaires, and opinion leaders that I am today. No, I began as an average upper-middle-class boy, raised in an average affluent suburb completely free of crime or economic distress.

One high school summer, I took a job at Wilson's Fish Market in the island resort town where my parents owned a modest eight-bedroom brick mansion formerly owned by a world-famous whaling captain.

This being my first professional position, I was eager to perform competently, so I prepared for the job by reviewing the works of the seminal writers on business — beginning with Niccolò Machiavelli and continuing right up through Alfred P. Sloan Jr. — whose *My Years with General Motors* was then a hot seller.

Armed with this knowledge (which I suspect surpassed that of the average Fortune 500 CEO of the day), it was obvious from the moment I stepped in the door that Wilson's Fish was not much of a business. Why?

☛ We were at the downstream end of an unreliable supply chain.
(Fish.)

☛ All corporate knowledge and memory, such as it was, resided in Mr. Wilson's brain. Despite his habit of scribbling notes on scratch

pads and fish wrap strewn throughout the shop, a lot of important information fell through his mental cracks.

☛ The workplace smelled — and not in a fresh, saltwatery-fish way, but in a we-need-to-clean-the-fridge-more-often way.

Even so, Mr. Wilson was reasonably successful, thanks to a natural ability to focus on the customer (gabbing with them as he sliced into a had-dock or popped open a clam) combined with a knack for cultivating his upstream supply partners (although the nightly imbibing with local fishermen that this required represented a significant expense item).

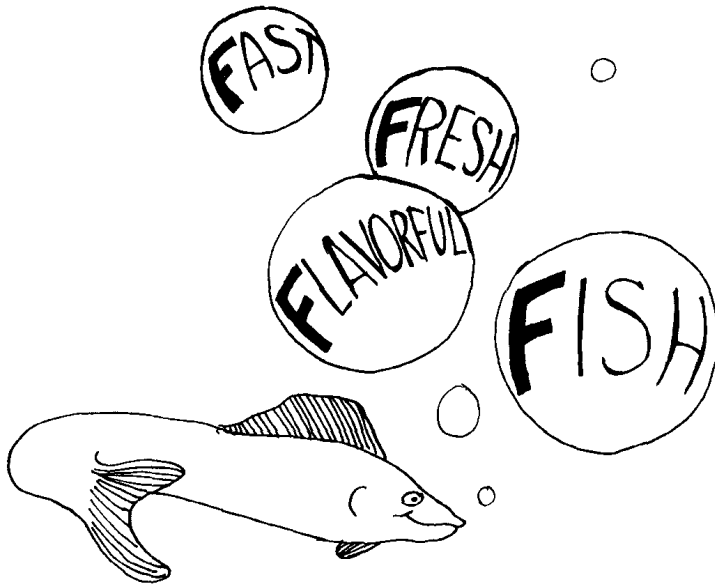
I saw, however, that Wilson's Fish had tremendous, unrealized potential. By redefining our mission, organizing for breakthrough improvement, and reengineering our core processes, we had the opportunity to shift our paradigm and virtually reinvent the Fish Market Industry, as it then was known.

And so, one evening when Mr. Wilson returned from an off-site conference (venue: Duffy's Tavern), I presented to him my Five-Year Plan for Wilson's Fish. It called for a program of change and improvement culminating in an IPO within two years, followed by worldwide expansion that would generate sufficient cash for Mr. Wilson to retire to Tarpon Springs by the age of 52.

Mr. Wilson eagerly agreed, and the next day a New Era began at Wilson's Fish. Up went a sign in the window:

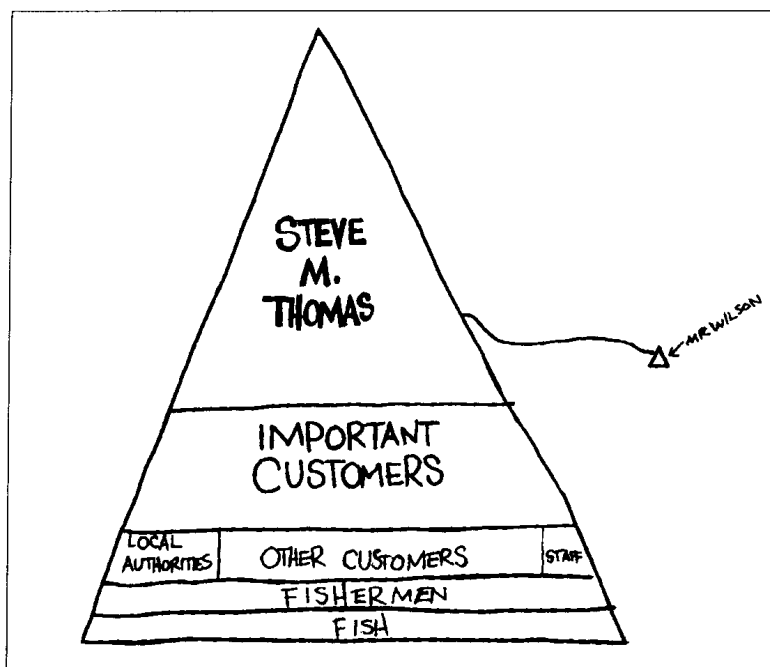
WILSON'S FISH

COMMITTED TO THE
FOUR F's



(Courtesy: Mr. Raymond Wilson)

I redesigned our organizational structure and redefined our competency models. Here is the org chart I sketched on a sheet of fish wrap:



(Courtesy: Fish & Seafood News)

I initiated an extensive program of Learning — inviting vacationing members of various oceanographic, ichthyological, and business institutions to visit Wilson's Fish on an informal basis to keep us abreast of new knowledge in fish and fish management. Honorariums were paid in beer and slightly outdated cooked shrimp.

Within a month, my many efforts began to pay off:

- Impulse purchase of high-margin items such as codfish cheeks and cocktail sauce jumped by 36 percent.

☛ Board of Health citations plummeted by 48 percent.

☛ Staff productivity skyrocketed by 117 percent, enabling Mr. Wilson to spend more time on long-neglected strategic issues, such as tidying up the storage shed out back.

So successful were we that — by the end of the summer — the leading trade publication, *Fish & Seafood News*, named Wilson's Fish as Seafood Retailer of the Year, 1963. Mr. Wilson was thrilled by this honor. He begged me to join his permanent staff. He offered a substantial increase in salary and promised a piece of the action within three years. I thanked him but said I felt obligated to enter the tenth grade and complete my formal education.

I will never forget that summer. Indeed, the lessons learned during those few weeks of hard work and intense fishy aroma have shaped my entire professional life:

☛ Running a fish market (ergo: any business) isn't really that hard.

☛ At the same time, business management isn't so easy that you'd want to spend your whole life doing it.

☛ Good presentation skills, a modicum of knowledge and plenty of high-level "strategy talk" can make you as much money — and possibly lots more — than long hours and hard work.

I sensed there must be many businesses that weren't that hard to run and there must be many people running them who were ignorant of the business fundamentals. I thought: Perhaps I can devote my entire life to making dazzling presentations of extremely obvious ideas to business people, borrowing their ideas if they have any, and getting huge fees and recognition for doing it!

It seemed too good to be true — but that is exactly what I have done for more than two decades now!

So, I reserve my deepest thanks for my earliest teacher and business mentor — and the man who still supplies me with finest quality picked lobster meat — Mr. Ray Wilson.

THANK YOU, for getting a young boy started on this wonderful life of Learning!

Stephen Michael Peter Thomas